



Do I look to the right, or do I look left before crossing the street in this country?

According to the State Department, a thousand American tourists have been killed in traffic accidents in each of the past seven years while traveling in foreign countries. This is far more than those killed by street crimes and terrorist acts.

One of the main causes is unfamiliarity with traffic patterns, especially in Great Britain, where the lanes are the opposite of those in the U.S. The accidents, usually at night, happen to pedestrians who look the wrong way before stepping into the street.

One such accident almost changed history, and it happened to a British visitor who made that same type of mistake when he looked the wrong way before stepping into a New York City street in the 1920s. Young Winston Churchill was hit by a taxicab, nearly killed and spent months in the hospital.

The same danger faces American tourists who rent cars in England and other countries where traffic rules are different. Other accidents that injure and kill American tourists involve hiring or riding in unsafe cars, taxis and buses.

When traveling on unfamiliar streets, know the rules and be extra careful when you venture out on them.